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Group Dynamics

PRINCIPLES AND APPLICATIONS

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Preface

This book offers a comprehensive treatment of the dynamics of small-group behavior. It is designed as a textbook for college students and for professional reading by psychologists, social scientists, teachers, and personnel managers.

As the subtitle indicates, we are concerned with both theory and empirical example. Accordingly, we offer first a systematic presentation of those aspects of group behavior which have come to comprise the central subject matter of group dynamics; namely, group structure, group cohesiveness, intergroup tensions, group learning, group problem-solving, and group leadership. Having laid down this theoretical framework, we then trace its important emergent applications to the vital areas of industry, community relations, political behavior, group psychotherapy, and education. Although the applications of group dynamics to education have received much attention in the past decade, writers in the field of group dynamics have not made an explicit and systematic analysis of these other areas. Of particular interest here is the subject of group psychotherapy and personality dynamics—topics of especial importance to an understanding of the formation and enhancement of groups, group tensions and conflicts, mutual dependence, group change, and the ebb and flow of the interpersonal process.

The book is divided into five parts. Part I lays down the historical foundations of group dynamics, tracing the sub-

ject from its earliest discernible origins in the latter part of the nineteenth century.

Part II details the dynamic factors which underlie group behavior. It examines the psychological structure of the group, with particular reference to its individual and collective properties. It describes the cohesive and disruptive factors in group behavior, with special consideration of interpersonal and group attractiveness and the psychology of hostile relations. Group behavior is also analyzed in the light of learning theory, and the relative merits of individual and group learning are carefully investigated.

The problems of the conflict and adjustment of groups, and their theoretical and practical solutions, are sympathetically yet critically delineated in Part III. Specifically, this is achieved by devoting a separate chapter to the nature of intergroup relations, group leadership, collective problem-solving, and the application of group-dynamic principles and findings to education, industry, community relations, and political behavior.

The discussion in Part IV is concerned with the role of the person in the group, particularly the relation of individual behavior and group dynamics. A detailed treatment of role behavior is followed by an analysis of the self-enhancing and self-constricting factors in the behavior of groups. And finally, the fundamentals of group psychotherapy are set forth, illustrating the emotional intensity of the interpersonal contacts in psychotherapeutic groups.

Part V aims to bring balance and perspective to the discussion by a critical analysis of the fundamental ideas and assumptions of group dynamics. It thus affords a detailed evaluation of its basic achievements and weaknesses both as a scientific discipline and as an instrument for human betterment.

The field of group dynamics emerges from the pages of this book as a valid scientific discipline, bristling with problems but with valuable applications for the study and enhancement of human relations. Empirical research and experimental investigation make up its characteristic temper.

While it lacks theoretical rigor and rigid experimental design, it has attained the level of dependable description if not that of empirical law. If present developments are indicative of its future, group dynamics should in the next decade be able to describe group behavior by means of empirical laws in which functional relations will explain group phenomena. Today, however, experimental results permit explanations of only limited scope; hence, we are not yet able to compare the findings in metrical terms.

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Part I

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Group Dynamics: Its Origins and Development

While the term "group dynamics" is new, the ideas and the knowledge which it represents are, as developments in the social sciences go, relatively old. As a matter of fact, the relevant knowledge in this area has been the concern, often explicitly, of most scholars and researchers in the domains of sociology, anthropology, and social psychology. It is difficult, if not impossible, to find sociological writings since the latter part of the nineteenth century in which the concept of social control is not a dominant one. Modern sociology, since its beginnings, has concerned itself with the processes by which individuals are compelled or induced to conform to the customs of the group. It is not an exaggeration to say that sociology is the study of the ways in which social conformity and social solidarity are achieved and maintained. So conceived, sociology has been investigating "group dynamics" almost from its beginnings.

While psychology came upon the group dynamics scene somewhat later, it has made important contributions to the subject during the past thirty years. This is particularly true of social psychology. Much of the value and importance of

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the psychologists' contribution to the subject lies in their experimental approach.

Probably no single individual is ever solely responsible for a new idea or discovery. Every researcher builds on the work of his predecessors. While Kurt Lewin has been the driving genius behind recent developments in group dynamics and gave it its name, there are, then, important sociological origins and parallels, as well as contributions by individuals in other disciplines, notably by psychologists and sociometrists. These developments we shall examine in the present chapter.

GROUP DYNAMICS DEFINED

Group dynamics is, quite obviously, concerned with the group. A group exists whenever two or more individuals are aware of one another, when they are in some important way interrelated. In this sense a group is not the same thing as an aggregate of individuals. The latter is a collection, a population, or a class. A group is a number of people in interaction with one another, and it is this interaction process that distinguishes the group from an aggregate.

More important, however, is the fact that the group which we study is not only interactive, it is also *dynamic*. It is a group whose members are in a continuously *changing* and *adjusting* relationship with reference to one another. The changes occur for several reasons. First, it is characteristic of interacting individuals to be in a state of tension, to be attracted or repelled by one another, to seek a resolution of the tensions, and to restore equilibrium among themselves. While the concept of homeostasis, or the return to equilibrium after any disturbance, can be and has been overstressed in modern psychology, it is useful in describing this phase of group development.

Changes occur, in the second place, when the group membership changes. The presence or absence of certain members, the introduction of new members, changes in leadership, and the like may affect the structure and the rate of change of a dynamic group. A change of membership, however,

does not in itself necessarily produce changes in a group. Some groups retain their structure in the face of continuing membership changes.

The foregoing observation points to a third reason for group changes. While we do not always know why some groups change and others tend to persist, the factors of group rigidity and group flexibility are important determinants of group change. It should be apparent to the reader that a rigid, that is, unadaptable, group is more resistant to change than a more flexible and adaptable one. Ideas and influences are resisted in the interests of maintaining equilibrium. The need for stability overshadows the desire or urgency for social change. While this rigidity forestalls for a time both internal and external pressures for change, the stability is often obtained at the price of unresolved tensions.

Group changes are dependent, finally, on the degree of organization of a group. The less organized the group is, relatively speaking, the less marked are those social-psychological forces which make for a high level of motivation, for group participation and cooperation, interdependence, and a constructive morale. The leader will be far less effective in an unorganized than in an organized group. Along with these positive qualities, however, the organized group is also subject to a much greater number and degree of frustrations and aggressions.[1]

On the basis of the foregoing remarks we can now define group dynamics as that division of social psychology which investigates the formation and change in the structure and functions of the psychological grouping of people into self-directing wholes. The formation and change of the group do not take place automatically and inevitably but are a consequence of the efforts of its members to solve their problems and satisfy their needs. A dynamic group is thus in a continuous process of restructuring, adjusting, and read-

[1] Cf. J. R. P. French, Organized and unorganized groups under fear and frustration, in *Studies in topological and vector psychology* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1944).

justing members to one another for the purpose of reducing
the tensions, eliminating the conflicts, and solving the prob-
lems which its members have in common.

Group dynamics is also increasingly defined in a "prac-
tical" sense. It is conceived as a technique of fostering
conciliation between individuals and between groups re-
garding important issues and practices. Research in group
dynamics aims to formulate not only the abstract principles
which underlie group behavior, but to devise techniques for
effecting group decisions and group actions.

EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF GROUP DYNAMICS

Scientific ideas, like most ideas, have no single origin.
Practically every important formulation has its equivalent or
parallel in the past. Every advance in human knowledge
proceeds from a body of facts or a system of ideas already
implicit in their predecessors. This is notably true of group
dynamics which, regrettably, is too often treated as a sub-
ject of very recent origin.

SOCIOLOGICAL ANTECEDENTS. No attempt will be made in
this section to write a comprehensive survey of sociologists'
contribution to the origin and growth of group dynamics.
Only enough evidence will be presented to make our asser-
tion concerning the role of sociology more than a bald and
unsupported statement.

From static to dynamic sociology. Early sociology, not-
ably as it is represented by such famous pioneers as Auguste
Comte and Herbert Spencer, was mostly philosophical, and
the society which it described was largely static. Analysis,
description, and classification abound in its writings. While
Comte wrote vaguely about social planning, and hence by
implication of social change and social control, he never
followed his own suggestive lead, but bogged down on the
idea of social destiny.[2]   Spencer's conception was even more

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[2] Auguste Comte, *Positive philosophy*, Vol. II (London: Trubner & Co.,
1875–1890).

static. He believed that society evolves in accordance with
fixed laws, and that any efforts to change it was not only
misguided but detrimental in the long run.[3]

Later in this same period, however, Lester Ward in Amer-
ica was writing his *Dynamic Sociology*. His ideas marked a
distinct shift away from Spencer's descriptive sociology and
Comte's sentimental "prevision" to the concept of "social
telesis," or the notion of society as a self-directing whole.[4]

It should be pointed out here that Ward's concept of
social self-direction was posited as an explanatory principle
on which to base effective social planning. It was used to
explain the basis on which to direct societal forces to progres-
sive ends. It was not conceived as a principle which would
explain the behavior of small, face-to-face groups, as is done
in contemporary group dynamics. We refer to it because
it marked the first important shift away from static to dy-
namic explanations, from the "genetic" to the "telic" analysis
of the social process. Further, it is the first explicit expres-
sion of the notion of directed, as contrasted with evolution-
ary, change in modern sociology.

The positive force in social dynamics, according to Ward,
was intellect and foresight. In this view we can perceive a
startling similarity between Ward's telic or intelligent social
process and the "group wisdom" of recent group dynamics.
The "wisdom of the group" refers to the group solution of a
problem, a solution resulting from the combined resources
which every member of a group is able to apply to it. Just
as societal change directed by the telic process is effected
by adjusting blind forces to surmount obstacles and secure
future ends, so a group of interacting persons, bringing into
the processes their individual resources, is often able to solve
its problem more effectively. This is so because an indi-
vidual, hampered by habitual learning "sets," is frequently

[3] Herbert Spencer, *First principles* (New York: Appleton–Century–
Crofts, Inc., 1878).

[4] L. F. Ward, *Dynamic sociology* (2 vols.; New York: Appleton–Century–
Crofts, Inc., 1893), Vol. I, p. 57. This work was first published in 1883.

less able to evaluate his own ideas and is often blinded by his own suggestions.[5]

Collective determinism: Émile Durkheim and others. Perhaps the most representative exponent of the group factor in human psychology is Émile Durkheim. Human behavior, according to him, can be explained only by knowing the collective structure of the group, particularly by its *réprésentations collectives.* These collective representations are products of the union of individuals in group life. They represent the common experiences of men in groups, just as individual representations or ideas symbolize the experiences of individual men.[6] The union of individuals into a common association is not, however, an additive process. Durkheim is very emphatic about this.[7] The whole is not composed of the sum of its parts; it includes them but also differs from them. This fact is important in Durkheim's system, for it makes clear the relationship of the individual and the group. While collective representations are composed of individual representations, the collective representations are at the same time distinct from them. This is Durkheim's way of emphasizing the importance of the group factor in human behavior. It should be added, however, that in this emphasis he ascribes an independent existence to the collective representations, and thus returns, by a different route and without intending to do so, to something reminiscent of Hegel's Objective Spirit.

Some devoted followers of Durkheim expanded his general ideas and applied them to the study of specific psychological processes. Lucien Lévy-Bruhl studied the effect of the group on human thinking. There are no *inherent* ways of thinking, according to him; the ways differ with differ-

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[5] The evidence, both theoretical and experimental, in confirmation of this conclusion, is impressive. We shall have occasion to examine some of it in later chapters.

[6] Émile Durkheim, Réprésentations individuelles et réprésentations collectives, *Rev. de Mét. et de Mor.*, 6 (1898), 274–302.

[7] *Les règles de la méthode sociologique* (Paris, F. Alcan, 1895), pp. 125–28. The student should compare this with recent field theory.

ences in the collective representations.[8] Charles Blondel applied Durkheim's principles to the study of the affective life. Feelings, he said, are not identical among human groups. They are products of group life. There are, accordingly, different ways of feeling in different groups. Grief at a funeral, for instance, is expressed differently in different groups, depending upon the affective ritual that prevails in each.[9] Maurice Halbwachs applied Durkheim's principles to the study of memory. Memory, he said, like thinking and feeling, is a collective phenomenon. It always presupposes some localization in a group. Outside a group a person could not remember; or at any rate, his memory would be unorganized and meaningless, for it would be devoid of a social context.[10]

Interactionism of Georg Simmel. No one in the history of sociology has made the concept of interaction as central as did Simmel. To him society *is* interaction. The proper study of the sociologist, he believed, is interactive social relationships (*Wechselwirkung*).[11]

Society, according to Simmel, is a pattern of all the functional relationships that bind individuals into an integral whole.[12] The concept of group belongingness (*Gruppenzugehörigkeit*), which plays a prominent part in current group dynamics, is basic in Simmel's analysis. It is fundamental to the understanding of such sociological facts as social contact and isolation. An individual with a low degree of group membership has few contacts, or few localizations in sociological space. The stranger, for example, is largely characterized by negative membership-character, or by isolation. In isolation an individual's life is segmented

[8] *Les fonctions mentales dans la sociétés inférieures* (Paris: F. Alcan, 1910).

[9] *Introduction à la psychologie collective* (Paris: A. Colin, 1928).

[10] *Les cadres sociaux de la mémoire* (Paris: 1925).

[11] This and other concepts which concern us here are found in his *Soziologie* (Leipzig: Duncker und Humblot, 1908).

[12] What follows is an adaptation of the present writer's article on the relation between Simmel's view and that of field theory. See H. Bonner, Field theory and sociology, *Sociol. Soc. Res.*, 33 (1949), 171–79.

and fragmentary, but as a functional or interactive unit in a group it becomes more unitary, for now it is part of the flowing stream of social events. Thus, while the individual's position appears superficially to be minimized, it actually gains in importance, for through participation it gains acceptance and approval.

The notion of conflict is very closely related to the group-dynamic concept of tension gradients. As conceived by both Simmel and group dynamicists, conflict is not necessarily negative. It is any restructuring of field organization. Simmel, indeed, defines it as a form of socialization.

The seeming paradox is resolved once we introduce the dialectical notion of the relation of opposition between contraries. Opposition is a high tension state involving success or failure by a social group in transcending the barriers to freedom of locomotion. When the conflict ends in the transcendence of the barriers, equilibrium is restored. Thus, while it superficially appears to be an element of division in society, conflict is in actuality an integrating relationship: "the resolution of the tension between contraries."[13]

Leadership—to which more space is devoted in the literature of group dynamics than to any other concept—was already given a modern formulation by Simmel, free from mysticism and folk thinking. Conceived in terms of interaction, or reciprocity of relationship, the leader and the led are parts of a single whole. Influence takes place in both directions. The leader and the led influence each other, so that without the one the other cannot function. Leadership is not a mystical influence emanating from the personality of the leader. The leader's influence is always limited by the conditions of the total group structure.[14]

Underlying much current writing on group dynamics is the implicit notion of spatiality. The terms "social regions," "psychological space," "topological boundaries," and the like,

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[13] Bonner. Field theory and sociology. p. 177. See also Simmel, Soziologie, p. 247.

[14] Simmel employed the term "superordination," rather than "leadership," for the most part. We suggest that his term is scientifically more neutral, and therefore preferable to, the folk-term "leadership."

were either foreshadowed or explicitly named in other terms in the writings of Simmel. In his chapter, "Die Kreuzung Sozialer Kreise," are found many contemporary ideas. The growth of an individual takes place in a social space, which can be designated by a circle. The circles frequently intersect, as when a person has membership in more than one group. He may belong, for instance, to a club, a church, and a college alumni association. The wider the area of social participation, the more numerous the intersections of the social circles.

Another spatial concept found in Simmel's work is "social boundary," a term used to describe the nature of social attitudes. Boundary separates one group from another, particularly the in-group from the out-group. Ethnocentrism and intergroup prejudice, which are vital problems in group dynamics, can be defined topologically, that is, spatially, as boundaries to which the behavior of a group can be ordered with respect to groups lying outside. Group life is replete with boundaries of circles that do not intersect, and which limit or prevent freedom of interaction. Within the in-group itself, these nonintersecting circles establish barriers to participation, in the form of mores, customs, laws, and institutions. Like present-day field theorists, furthermore, Simmel notes the existence of boundaries within the individual's own private personality—"that deeply isolated region of intimate experience the boundary of which no one can cross. It is the plane of reality of the individual's life-space to which the multitude of his unfulfilled drives and inarticulate longings may be ordered."[15]

The topological distribution of individuals in groups and of groups themselves presents us with a mechanism of individual and group differentiation. It explains the persistence as well as the change in social groups. According to Simmel, the concept of spatiality is thus an integrating element (*Beisammensein*) in the group process.[16]

[15] Bonner, Field theory and sociology, p. 175.
[16] Simmel, *Soziologie*, p. 616.

Social process and the primary group: Charles H. Cooley.
It is difficult to understand the omission of Cooley's work
on the primary group by those who attempt to attribute the
origins of group dynamics to very recent researchers. His
entire approach to both individual and social behavior was
from the point of view of the concept of the primary group.
Cooley believed that social process and social control, two
fundamental factors of all group dynamics, have their being
in the intimate and face-to-face interactions which are the
mark of the primary group. In this group the individual is
keenly sensitive to the opinions and actions of others. His
very "human nature," that is, his self and his personality, is
developed here. The individual learns to experience vicari-
ously the experiences of other persons in the group, to view
himself through the eyes, or to play the roles, of other per-
sons. In this process sympathy is developed, and persons
closely identify themselves with one another, so that what
happens to one person is the intimate concern of all mem-
bers of the group. The primary group is thus seen by Cooley
to have a *psychological structure* as represented by this feel-
ing of close identification, or intimacy.[17] An individual's
behavior is thus determined not so much by his personality
make-up as by the psychological structure of the group.
This psychological structure is not to be conceived as exist-
ing separately and in its own right; rather it represents the
fact that individuals exist psychologically for each other in
some way, that they are responsive to one another's feelings,
actions, and opinions.

When contemporary group dynamicists speak of the in-
fluence of the group on the individual's behavior, in which
people of disparate personalities are led to the same opinions
or behavior, they are but restating Cooley's basic and fruit-
ful ideas. A statement by Krech and Crutchfield typifies
this similarity. They define a group as "two or more people

[17] This theme runs through Cooley's three important volumes, namely,
Human nature and the social order (New York. Charles Scribner's Sons,
1902), *Social organization* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1909), and
Social process (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1918).

who bear an *explicit psychological relationship to one another*." They add that even though the individual's may differ, when they become members of a strongly knit group, when they "exist psychologically for each other in some significant way," they form a dynamic group.[18]

Group influence, group cohesion, group decision-making, while predominantly associated with recent group dynamics research, are concepts which abound in different terminology in Cooley's writings. In describing the primary group Cooley writes:

> The result of intimate association, psychologically, is a certain fusion of individualities in a common whole, so that one's very self, for many purposes at least, is the common life and purpose of the group. Perhaps the simplest way of describing this wholeness is by saying that it is a "we"; it involves the sort of sympathy and mutual identification for which "we" is the natural expression. One lives in the feeling of the whole and finds the chief aims of his will in that feeling.[19]

In summary, the primary group controls behavior, changes attitudes, and leads to common decisions. As in the primary group, so in the groups investigated by group dynamics, social order is achieved by role-playing, by sympathetic perception of another's ideas and sentiments, by consensus through collective problem-solving, and the like. Not formal instruments, but group processes, are used for social control and desired change.[20]

EARLY DEVELOPMENTS WITHIN PSYCHOLOGY. Until the end of the last century psychology had not concerned itself specifically with the behavior of groups. Its concern with the behavior of the individual, and with individual differ-

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[18] D. Krech and R. S. Crutchfield, *Theory and problems of social psychology* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1948), p. 18.

[19] Cooley, *Social organization*, p. 23.

[20] The professional sociologist who misses in this survey such important names as Tonnies, Ratzenhofer, A. F. Bentley, John Dewey, and G. H. Mead is reminded that this survey is not a history but an attempt to show that group dynamics is not as new as some enthusiastic followers of Lewin and of Moreno seem to believe.

ences, had left group psychology largely to sociologists.[21] Nevertheless psychologists eventually came to grips with the role of the group. We shall now examine this development briefly.

Effect of the group situation on performance. Since the establishment of the first psychological laboratory in Leipzig, in 1879, psychologists have been strongly motivated to put their hypotheses and generalizations to experimental test. Almost to the end of the nineteenth century, nevertheless, experimental work in psychology concentrated on the behavior of the individual. In 1897, however, Norman Triplett initiated the first experimental investigation of social influences on individual performance.[22] In a detailed exposition of the records of bicycle races and the performance of other motor tasks, and an evaluation and discussion of these records, Triplett demonstrated that a rider's speed was significantly increased when he was paced than when he was unpaced. The presence of another contestant, his data show, "serves to liberate latent energy not ordinarily available." The "dynamogenic" factor—how "modern" this sounds!—is an important item in the performance of an act, as compared with the performance of the same act in isolation from others.[23]

Triplett's investigation leaves no doubt in our minds that an awareness of the presence or absence of other human beings is an important factor in performance. It leaves no doubt in our minds, also, that the group differential was recognized and experimentally investigated in psychology four decades before the advent of the discipline of group

[21] This is considerably true even of Freud who, despite his early interest in the psychology of the group, was interested in it to a great extent in so far as it might throw light upon the group origin of the human ego. See his *Group psychology and the analysis of the ego* (London: International Psychoanalytical Library, 1922).

[22] See Norman Triplett, The dynamogenic factors in pacemaking and competition, *Amer. J. Psychol.*, 9 (1897), 507–33.

[23] The present writer is indebted to W. H. Burnham for the citation of Triplett's article. See William H. Burnham, The group as a stimulus to mental activity, *Science*, 31 (1910), 761–67.

dynamics. Triplett's investigation showed what recent group dynamics and social psychology in general have sufficiently demonstrated: a solitary individual and the same individual in a group are two different psychological structures.

Mayer, a German educator, designed an investigation in which he tested school children to determine whether, and if so under what conditions, the work of pupils in a group gives better results than pupils working alone.[24] The pupils were representative of different abilities and temperament, and the material on which they worked—mental arithmetic, memory tests, written arithmetic—was carefully chosen and was familiar to the pupils. The performance of the pupils in groups was, in general, superior to their work as isolates. This difference characterized not only the amount of time consumed in performing the task but the quality of the work performed.

During the same period other German psychologists and educators were investigating the problem. Meumann, a pioneer in intelligence testing in Germany, compared the retention of memorized materials of pupils when working alone and when working in a group. The difference, especially in children under twelve years of age, was strikingly in favor of group performance. In addition, he found that the majority of children preferred classroom work to individual work, and that most of those who preferred solitary work were children who, in the nomenclature of today, were somewhat maladjusted.[25]

Perhaps the most rigorously experimental work on the influence of the group on individual performance prior to 1914 was that of Moede. He investigated the role of the group in increasing or decreasing an individual's speed and vigor in the performance of muscular work. He found that competition tended to retard the speed of fast performers and accelerate the speed of slow ones. Intergroup rivalry increased

[24] See August Mayer, Über Einzel-und Gesamtleistung des Schulkindes, *Arch. f. d. Ges. Psychol.*, *1* (1903), 276–416.
[25] Ernst Meumann, *Arch. f. d. Ges. Psychol.*, *4* (1904). See also his *Haus-und Schularbeit* (Leipzig: Klinkhardt, 1914).

the individual's energy output, as contrasted with interindividual competition, which had no noticeable effect on the single individual's expenditure of energy.[26]

Effect of the group on cognitive behavior: F. H. Allport. Dissatisfied with the speculative theories of sociologists and social psychologists, Allport set himself the task of subjecting the "crude generalizations" of the past to experimental tests.[27] His experiments, which need not be described in detail, established some interesting and important results. He found that subjects produced *more* mental, that is, verbal, associations in groups than when isolated. The *speed* of associations in the group was also greater—especially in the early phase of the association process. Toward the end of the task, however, when the subjects were tired, being alone favored concentration, whereas group work contributed no benefit to the final and more difficult stages of the task.[28]

Allport next investigated experimentally the influence of the group upon the thought process, as typified in written arguments. He found that more ideas were produced in the group than by individuals working alone. When the ideas were compared for their quality, however, he found that those of superior quality occurred more frequently in the solitary worker than in the group. While more words were used in the arguments of the group—probably because the presence of others induced "a more conversational and expansive form of expression"—the ideas in the group were of a lower logical order. Intense logical thinking was much more characteristic of the individual working in solitude. "These results," Allport concludes, "appear to be related to the common observation that work requiring imagination

[26] W. Moede, Der Wetteifer, seine Struktur und sein Ausmass, *Z. f. padag. Psychol.*, 15 (1914), 353–68. Moede also investigated experimentally the effect of the group on such standard individual performances as learning, forgetting, association, and attention. See further his *Experimentelle Massenpsychologie* (Leipzig, S. Hirzel, 1920).

[27] See F. H. Allport, The influence of the group upon association and thought, *J. exp. Psychol.*, 3 (1920), 159–82.

[28] *Ibid.*, pp. 166–67.

or more concentrated and original thought is best per-formed in seclusion."[29] Group influence, in short, was found to improve the quantity but not the quality of mental per-formance.

Burnham, on the basis of his review of several studies, came to the same conclusion. He adds, further, that there are undoubtedly great individual differences as regards the effect of the social environment, and suggests that there may be a type of individual that does his best work in solitude and another type that does his best work in a group. Finally, he observes—and here he is reminiscent of William James and Charles H. Cooley—that even in his solitude the thinker is not psychologically alone.

The artist always works with the audience in his mind. The teacher also and the orator are apt to do much of their work with the class or audience in mind. . . . In fact this social stimulus colors everything. It is comparable only to the constant peripheral stimulation which is necessary to keep us awake; in like manner a social stimulus is neces-sary as an internal condition, as we may say, of consciousness.[30]

According to Dashiell, who also approached the problem of the effect of the group experimentally and investigated the effect of the *real* as compared with the *imagined* presence of others, there are two discernible trends regarding the prob-lem. As participation in the group increases there is an increase in speed of performance and a decrease in its qual-ity and accuracy. In most cases of group performance there is a leveling effect, so that the poorer individual workers im-prove in a group, while the superior ones perform less satis-factorily; that is, the group becomes more homogeneous.[31]

[29] *Ibid.*, p. 182. See further his *Social psychology* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1924), chap. xi.

[30] Burnham, The group as a stimulus, pp. 765–66.

[31] See J. F. Dashiell, An experimental analysis of some group effects, *J. abnorm. soc. Psychol.*, 25 (1930), 190–99; Experimental studies of the in-fluence of social situations on the behavior of individual human adults, in C. Murchison (ed.), *Handbook of social psychology* (Worcester, Mass.: Clark University Press, 1935), pp. 1097–1158; *Fundamentals of general psychology* (3d ed.; Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1949), p. 484.

KURT LEWIN AND CONTEMPORARY GROUP DYNAMICS

To leap from the second and third decades of this century to current development may appear arbitrary and unwarranted. However, there are available studies that fill the gap. The important fact is that though Lewin's work on field dynamics, or the influence of group- or field-forces, was formulated and published in the late twenties, it was not until he settled in the United States that he began to apply his theoretical concepts to group behavior and to put them to crucial experimental tests.

The present writer has no desire to become a partisan in the current controversy over the priority of Lewin or Moreno in the establishment of group dynamics, for our survey leaves no doubt in our minds that neither one is the founder of the discipline. There is little historical justification for Toeman's assertion regarding the origin of action research (and hence of group dynamics), that "it was J. L. Moreno, author of *Who Shall Survive? A New Approach to the Problem of Human Inter-relations* (1934), who many years before them [Collier and Lewin] developed the theoretic foundations and instruments of action research."[32] We shall merely point out in passing that the Lewinians are more directly associated, both in their theoretical formulations and concrete applications, with the group-dynamics movement than is Moreno and sociometry. This observation in no way detracts, however, from the importance of Moreno's work.

FIELD THEORY. The conceptual scheme and the basic theoretical formulations regarding human behavior, which has come to be known as field theory, was formulated by Lewin in Germany in the second and third decades of this century. In reviewing the growth of group dynamics and

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[32] Z. Toeman, in a letter criticizing Laura Thompson's imputed claim, but denied by the latter, that Kurt Lewin is to be credited with the origin of action research. See *Sci. Monthly, 70* (1950), 345-46. See further, L. Thompson, Action research among American Indians, *Sci. Monthly, 70,* (1950), pp. 34-40.

comparing it with recent developments, it is easy to lose sight of the fact that the dynamical view of Lewin, or one very much like it, is a necessary condition for explaining the nature of human groups nonvitalistically. The dynamic group, from this point of view, is always a system—a complex of two or more individuals in symbolic or affective inter-action. It cannot be accounted for only in terms of the pre-existing characteristics of its individual members; it is to be explained more adequately in terms of the dynamic relations which the individuals bear to one another. The group con-stituted by this mutual or interactive relationship is not a "steady state" merely, nor a self-contained equilibrium, but a continuous process of adaptation of individuals to one an-other and to their mutual problems. The result of this mutual adaptation is a set or complex of differentiations, integrations, and ever more complex patterns of organization.

The basic concept in this view, whatever terminology is used, is *action in a field*. In nonsocial action, such as that of many animals, it may be called *simple behavior*. In the human individual, who always lives in a group, it is *sym-bolic interaction*. In group behavior it is an *intricate net of symbolic interactions*. When the group, finally, is compli-cated, as it usually is, by cultural demands or expectations, the behavior consists of *sanctioned forms of symbolic inter-action*. Group dynamics as a science is thus an interdis-ciplinary investigation. It is the emphasis upon and exempli-fication of this interdisciplinary aspect which characterizes all of Lewin's psychological theories and researches.

One must point out, against persistent criticisms of the foregoing view, that in this mode of analysis the group is never reified. That reification has been characteristic of most earlier views of group structure cannot be denied. Be-cause individuals act *as if* their groups were metaphysically real, we tend unwittingly to look upon them as objectively real.[33] In Lewin's view, however, the group is not the sum

[33] See F. H. Allport's telling criticism of the group-mind hypothesis in The group fallacy in relation to social science, *Amer. J. Sociol.*, 29 (1924), 668–706.

of its members. It is a structure that emerges from the inter-
actions of individuals, a structure which itself produces
changes in the individual members. Research has shown
that it is difficult to predict the behavior of persons in a
group from premeasures of personality variables. The clear
fact emerges that "when individuals are put together a *sys-
tem* is created [and this] is the critical fact which cannot be
overlooked."[34]

Lewin resolved an old difficulty regarding the nature of
the group and thereby bridged the gap between the group-
oriented hypothesis and the individualistic approach. Much
thinking and speculation regarding the group had defined it
as a collective entity, or group mind. This view held that a
group of people acts, feels, and thinks as a distinct being,
for it *is* a distinct being.[35] The view of Le Bon was almost,
but not quite, outgrown by McDougall. According to the
latter, a group is an organized "system of forces," greater,
more powerful, more comprehensive than any single indi-
vidual, or any sum of individuals. It can think, will, and act
in a manner similar to that of an individual who performs the
same activities.[36] The chief merit of McDougall's view is his
marked stress on groups as "unities" and "organic wholes."

The individualistic approach, on the other hand, as repre-
sented best by F. H. Allport, who helped us to break away
from the vitalistic thinking of the past, runs the danger of
reducing all group behavior to an elementaristic form.
Group behavior, he held, is to be explained by the same
mechanisms that explain the behavior of the individual.

[34] R. L. Solomon and T. N. Lemann, *Report for the first five years,
1946–1951* (Cambridge, Mass.: Laboratory of Social Relations, Harvard
University, 1952). The above analysis runs throughout the works of Lewin,
especially as expounded in the following: *Field theory and social science*
(New York: Harper & Bros., 1951) and Group decision and social change,
in G. E. Swanson, T. M. Newcomb, and E. L. Hartley (eds.), *Readings in
social psychology* (2d ed.; New York: Henry Holt & Co., Inc., 1952), pp.
330-44.

[35] See G. Le Bon, *The crowd* (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1917), origi-
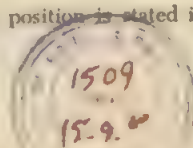nally published in Paris in 1895.

[36] W. McDougall, *The group mind* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons,
Inc., 1920), pp. 9–16.

Thus, in contrast to most early psychologists and sociologists, who placed the group before the individual, Allport placed the individual before the group. His assertion that "if we take care of the individuals, psychologically speaking, the groups will be found to take care of themselves," is surprisingly uncritical in a psychologist who has shown more than ordinary scientific acumen. His view, instead of bringing the individual and the group together and stressing their inseparability, virtually eliminates the group altogether. It places group phenomena in the individual and by an additive process describes them as the sum total of the actions of each individual taken separately. This individualistic approach goes contrary to a generally accepted scientific proposition, namely, that a group possess properties which are different from those of the individuals taken separately. While Allport's view has made an important contribution in exorcising the "group mind" from psychology and arguing for the importance of the individual in group processes, he has failed to give us an adequate account of the crucial relation between the individual and the group.[37]

Properties of psychological groups. Until recently the focus in group dynamics, as we have shown, was not on such large and complex social forms as cultures, nations, and governments, but on smaller face-to-face groups, which might be called *psychological* groups. While it might be argued that there is no essential psychological difference between formal social organizations and psychological groups, this assertion rests on dubious premises. Whether or not the psychological factors that lead a small group, a committee, for instance, to a collective decision are in principle the same as those that impel a nation to engage in war, there is evidence that leads one to doubt the similarity of the two processes. This is, however, an open issue.

A psychological group exists only when at least two conditions prevail: (1) there must be at least two persons in

[37] Allport's systematic position is stated in his *Social psychology*, which has already been cited.

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15-9.

relation to each other, and (2) they must be interactive. The psychological "force" which holds them together and forms an elementary group is an *interact*. A psychological group is thus characterized by at least minimal awareness in which each individual responds at least minimally to the other. Maximally, each person perceives the others not only from his own perspective, but from the perspective of all of them. In terms of its dynamic properties, the psychological group is a structure of behaving individuals who are constantly undergoing a redistribution relative to one another. It forms a "field," not in the sense that it has an existence of its own, but in the sense that, while it differs from its members, the latter behave in such a way that the field, or the psychological structure as a whole, becomes the crucial and deciding factor in the behavior of each. As in any *Gestalt* or whole, the individuals are not obliterated, but they act now in accordance with the field of forces generated by the responses of each to all.

The upshot of the foregoing analysis is that neither the individual nor the psychological group structure has a separate existence. Each implies and functionally depends upon the other. The group's behavior always takes place between or among individual's; and the behavior of individuals is determined by the structure of their interrelationship. The study of the group, or the science of group dynamics, accordingly, is interdisciplinary. It accounts for group behavior by integrating relevant data from several disciplines, especially psychology, sociology, and cultural anthropology.[38]

EXPERIMENTS WITH GROUPS. It was characteristic of Lewin, especially after he settled in America, to put his ideas to experimental test and to work out their practical implications. His pioneer research in this connection was carried on at the University of Iowa with the able assistance of Ronald Lippitt and R. K. White. This experimental study is now so well known, and its main results have been so com-

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[38] See K. Lewin, *A dynamic theory of personality*, trans. by D. K. Adams and K. E. Zener (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1935), chap. i.

pletely assimilated in contemporary social psychology, that
a detailed presentation here is unnecessary. However, the
following summary may prove useful.

Study of "social climates." Lewin and his collaborators
set out to investigate the effect on its members of small
groups organized along "democratic," "authoritarian," and
"laissez faire" patterns. The three groups were composed of
ten-year-old boys. In the democratic group the leader did
not order or direct and was "fact-minded" in his evaluation
of the boys' activities. The boys for the most part worked
out their own problems, but were free to consult the leader
whenever they desired. In the authoritarian group, policies
and activities were determined by the leader, and his evalua-
tion of the boys' work was "personal." In the laissez faire
group the leader neither participated nor voluntarily gave
suggestions, and the boys were given complete freedom to
solve their problems in their own way.

The results in behavior and work in these groups were
strikingly different. These differences can be brought out
by describing the authoritarian group only, for the other
two varied from it in expected ways. The experiment clearly
demonstrated that the authoritarian atmosphere impaired
initiative and independence and bred hostility and aggres-
siveness. The boys were self-centered, frustrated, and hos-
tile to a much larger degree than those of either the demo-
cratic or laissez faire group. They tended, furthermore, to
be submissive, lifeless, and apathetic, and bodily tensions
were frequently manifested.[39]

Action research in industry. When Lewin moved to the
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, he began to apply his

[39] K. Lewin, R. Lippitt, and R. K. White, Patterns of aggressive be-
havior in experimentally created "Social Climates," *J. soc. Psychol.*, 10
(1939), 271-99. See also R. Lippitt, An experimental study of authoritarian
and democratic group atmosphere, in *Studies in topological and vector
psychology*, Vol. I (University of Iowa Studies in Child Welfare, No. 16,
1940); R. Lippitt and R. K. White, The "social climate" of children's
groups, in R. Barker *et al., Child development and behavior* (New York:
McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1943).

knowledge of group psychology to industry. In a controlled experiment which he performed before his untimely death, he was able to demonstrate that poor motivation, occasioned by the workers' resentment against authoritarian methods in a factory, was a very important factor in their failure and their unproductivity. The authoritarian management was found to be the frustrating agent in production efficiency. When the workers were permitted to air their own views and make suggestions, they felt that they were—as indeed they were—participants in the decision-making process, and their motivation improved and production exceeded previous levels.[40]

Group decision in changing attitudes. The effect of the group on the behavior of the individual was demonstrated by Lewin's experiment in changing people's food habits. During World War II, when meat for civilian consumption was scarce, Lewin and his collaborators were able, by means of group self-decision, to induce people to eat meats which are usually rejected by American homemakers. The investigators used six groups, consisting of thirteen to seventeen persons, in the experiment. Three groups were encouraged, by means of lectures, demonstrations, and patriotic appeals, to eat kidneys, sweetbreads, and beef hearts. The other three groups were given the same lectures, but they were also given opportunities to discuss the subject freely and at length. The results were clear cut. Of the women who listened to the lectures without participating in any discussion, only 3 per cent served any of the recommended foods. However, 32 per cent of the women who not only attended the lectures but also discussed the problem and arrived at their own decisions regarding the use of these meats served them to their families.

From this experiment Lewin concluded what subsequent researches and experiments have been confirming: When members of a group themselves have an opportunity to get

[40] See K. Lewin, *Resolving social conflicts* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1948), pp. 125–41; L. Coch and J. R. P. French, Jr., Overcoming resistance to change, *Hum. Relat., 1* (1948), 512–32.

the facts in a problem situation, they will solve it together and accept the solution because it is a product of their own deliberations. People will believe facts, in other words, because they themselves have discovered them and for the same reason that they believe in themselves.[41]

CONCLUDING REMARKS. It was pointed out before (p. 20) that premeasures of personality variables are not very helpful in predicting the behavior of persons in a group. This conclusion is in line with the field dynamic principle that the structure of the present situation determines an individual's behavior. This principle—the principle that only the contemporaneous field of forces or events affect an individual— has been the most controversial tenet in Lewin's systematic position. Whether it will be ultimately confirmed, we cannot here decide, but that it is logically necessary and methodologically useful in a systematic description of group behavior at present cannot be doubted. Unless we assume it as a premise, we cannot account for the crucial difference between individual and group behavior. Unless we use it as a working principle, we are baffled by the fact that, irrespective of an individual's psychological biography, he behaves in accordance with the properties of the group at a particular time.

In the interest of scientific objectivity we must make it clear that, contrary to widespread interpretations, the principle of the contemporaneity of causation does not deny the efficacy of the past nor the motivating force of the future. In meeting criticisms of his principle, Lewin carefully stated his view in terms of the perspective of time. The individual, he said, perceives not only the present situation but acts on the basis of his own past and his expectations of the future. The psychological past, present, and future are properties of a psychological field at a given time. The essence of scientific explanation and prediction of events in a certain area is

[41] For details of the above experiment see Lewin, Group decision and social change, in Swanson *et al., Readings in social psychology,* pp. 330–44. The question might be raised whether the discussion group would have come to the same conclusion in the absence of the lectures.

the ordering of change to the conditions of the field at the time. This way of conceptualizing psychological causation makes it possible to account for individual and group behavior by means of a single principle, and promises to bridge the gap between individual and social psychology.[42]

MORENO AND SOCIOMETRY

While Moreno's work in sociometry is well known, its relevance to the developing field of group dynamics has not been widely recognized. Paradoxically, the Lewinians, who should have been quick to appreciate the relationship, have been less receptive to its importance than social scientists generally. His studies of role behavior, surely, should have been recognized as being directly related to group dynamics.[43]

ROLE THEORY. The subject of role-playing was extensively discussed in general and abstract form by Cooley and G. H. Mead. The merit of Moreno's work on the subject is that he used it at once as a mode of analyzing intragroup behavior and as a method of measuring social interaction. Taking the role of another is a mark of the socialized human being. Since one individual's role-taking presupposes the role-playing of another, role behavior gives people opportunities to accept and to be accepted by others. Role behavior is possible only in a group. The group presents numerous situations in which the individual can display his skills, exercise his abilities, and become recognized for whatever individual merits he may possess and the group is willing to recognize and reward. Group harmony depends in good measure on the ability and willingness of every individual to play his roles in such a way as to enable every other individual to play his own role successfully. Much of

[42] For a comprehensive, though somewhat technical discussion of the concept of the present field, see Lewin, *Field theory in social science*, pp. 43–59.

[43] For an early statement of role behavior and of sociometry, see J. L. Moreno, *Who shall survive? A new approach to the problem of human interrelations* (Washington, D.C.: Nervous and Mental Disease Publishing Co., 1934). Our survey has made clear, we hope, that the approach is not *new*.

the satisfaction that a person finds in belonging to a group is derived from his opportunities to play his role as one of its members.

Moreno described the interactive nature of role behavior in terms of attraction and repulsion. Mutual attraction, or positive sociometric choice, makes group interaction possible and fruitful; mutual repulsion, or negative sociometric choice, is inimical to interpersonal action. The attraction-repulsion valence is, in Moreno's system, the fundamental principle of social interaction and interindividual relations.

SOCIOMETRY. Moreno was not satisfied with a formal analysis and description of role behavior, but introduced a technique for measuring the attraction-repulsion dimension in human relationships. This technique he calls "sociometry." By this method attraction and repulsion of members of a group are represented by "sociograms," that is, diagrams indicating who is attracted by whom on the basis of spontaneous expressions of likes and dislikes by individuals for one another. The concepts of leadership and isolation have also been investigated by this technique, especially by Helen Jennings, a close collaborator of Moreno.[44]

Like field theory, sociometry is eminently an interdisciplinary investigation of group relations. It has, accordingly, been widely used by social psychology and sociology. In the interests of scientific objectivity, however, it should be added that the interdisciplinary character of both the theory and the method of sociometry has been adversely affected by the partisan nature of Moreno's influence. Neither psychologists nor sociologists have been as receptive to Moreno's work as they might have been because of the sectarian and almost cultist development of the field.

GROUP THERAPY. While Moreno's work is not directly associated with group psychotherapy the kinship is very obvious. The concept of role-playing has been used by Moreno in his technique of "psychodrama." This consists in

[44] See Helen H. Jennings, *Leadership and isolation* (2d ed.; New York: Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., 1950).

the role-enactment of individuals in a group in more or less spontaneous expressions of emotional conflicts. Thus, a husband and wife with the aid, if necessary, of other individuals called "auxiliary egos," who represent important persons in the real-life situations of the married couple, have an opportunity to externalize their hostilities and thereby learn to see them and each other more objectively. The objectification of the conflicts through role-playing helps to resolve them. In this way the role-enacting group serves as an instrument of therapy for individual tensions and conflicts. Like all group therapy, psychodrama is a form of social re-education in which the individual is given an opportunity, through group participation and a permissive group expression, to acquire skill in role behavior and to increase individual security by learning the role-expectancy of others. The group is a form of social treatment in that group experiences of identification and acceptance are therapeutic realities.[45]

CONCLUSION

Our survey of the development of group dynamics has, we hope, established its multiple origin. It has, too, we trust, pointed up the futility and unfruitfulness of attempts to give priority to a single person or to a specific discipline. Sociologists, by the very nature of their interests, were without doubt pioneers in the study of group phenomena. Once they emancipated themselves from the static and metaphysical speculations of the precursors of scientific sociology, they concentrated largely on social change, social control, and collective behavior. In evaluating their contributions to the emerging science of group dynamics the most telling criticism is that their ideas were largely abstract and formal and inaccessible to objective and experimental investigation.

Psychologists, on the other hand, thanks to the established tradition of experimental attack on psychological

[45] See J. L. Moreno, *Psychodrama*, Vol I (New York: Beacon House, Inc., 1946).

problems stemming from Weber, Fechner, and Wundt, were quick to subject group phenomena to experimental investigation. Thus, near the end of the nineteenth century, as we have seen, while sociologists were discussing social change and social control in the form of verbal analysis and empirical observation, psychologists were setting up experiments under controlled conditions.

Both sociologists and psychologists, nevertheless, made us aware of the importance of the presence or absence of other persons in the behavior of the individual. Both have stressed the fact that an isolate and a group have different psychological structures and that, accordingly, just as one can study the psychological structure of an individual, so one can investigate the psychological structure of a group. Sociologists and psychologists alike have recognized the potency of social stimulation in the form of encouragement, criticism, rivalry, and the like. They have surmised that the essential difference between the behavior of an individual and that of a group is that the isolated individual, if it is possible to discover a genuine isolate, has no established relationship with others, whereas a group of individuals always behaves in a social context.

If our survey has held fast to historical evidence, and if it has been relatively free from partisanship and personal bias—and we believe that it has done both—then it should be clear that group dynamics in its current form is *par excellence* an indisciplinary investigation. If we have failed to include the contributions of other social sciences, notably political science and anthropology to group dynamics, it is not due to a lack of appreciation of their share in bringing it to its developed form but to the limited scope of our investigation.[46]

[46] See for example, K. W. Deutsch, *Political community at the international level: problems of definition and measurement*, Organization Behavior Section, Foreign Policy Project, No. 2 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1953), E. D. Chapple, Quantitative analysis of the interaction of individuals, *Proc. Nat. Acad. Sci.*, 25 (1939), 58–67, E. D. Chapple and C. M. Arensberg, Measuring human relations, *Genet. Psychol. Monogr.*, Vol. 22, (1940). For political science ideas, see Chapter 11.

Our survey, finally, has suggested something of the slow process in which group psychology has emancipated itself from vitalistic descriptions of group phenomena and from the strong influence of the group-mind fallacy on the theoretical analysis of group properties. For significant work in this emancipation social psychology and group dynamics owe a signal debt to Floyd H. Allport and Kurt Lewin.

A word of caution should be interjected here, one that will be applicable throughout the exposition of every phase of group dynamics. There is a tendency in many present-day studies of group dynamics to overstress the influence of the group on the individual and to submerge the individual's role in the group. In some quarters this tendency has been carried to such lengths as to make the individual practically inconsequential. Existing data and experimental research *do not* support the confident claim that the group is almost always superior to the individual in solving problems, acquiring knowledge, and resolving social tensions. They *do not* justify the claims made for "leaderless" groups, or for the assertion that leadership to be justified in a democratic society must always be passed around from person to person, like a pipe of peace. It is historically unrealistic to minimize the role of ascendant individuals in the development of groups and the growth of human institutions. Group dynamics has *not* demonstrated that creativeness is largely, if not wholly, a group phenomenon. Just as it is a form of egotism to extol the individual beyond what the facts themselves permit, so it is a form of tyranny to worship the group as if it were the source of all excellence. The conception of group dynamics presented in this book, therefore, while reviewing as many facts as possible to show the effect—and even the frequent superiority—of the group over the individual, never implies that the studies here described are sufficient to corroborate the claims of extremists. Since our final chapter, however, deals in detail with this phenomenon, we merely voice our initial caveat here, hoping that the reader will bear it in mind as he surveys with us the many problems of group dynamics.

Part II

GROUP DEVELOPMENT: DYNAMIC FACTORS IN GROUP BEHAVIOR

Psychological Structure
of the Group

The study of the human group, which for a time was almost entirely the concern of the sociologist, is now an important problem in social psychology and a fundamental topic in group dynamics. Research on the nature of the group is an important convergence of several disciplines.

We gave initial descriptions of the group in Chapter 1, especially in our brief account of field theory and its analysis of the properties of psychological groups. The subject is so basic and important in the exposition of group dynamics that a more detailed treatment of it is essential. This is all the more evident in view of the fact that, as we have already stressed, earlier conceptions of the nature of the group were scarcely more than metaphysical fictions based either on common-sense observation or on vitalistic theories of the organization of parts into wholes. In this chapter, therefore, we shall present a social-psychological view of group structure that is at once consistent with the research discoveries of recent social science and the canons of a rigorous scientific analysis.

THEORETICAL ANALYSIS OF THE GROUP

The group, we have said, is not an aggregate or collection of individuals. Nor is the group, we have also argued, something which has an independent existence apart from the individuals who compose it. Concepts such as Le Bon's "collective mentality," Durkheim's "collective representations," and McDougall's "group-mind," to cite only the best known, are scientifically untenable. To argue as F. H. Allport does, on the other hand, that if we take care of the individual the group will take care of itself (see Chapter 1, p. 21) is not supported by the facts. Neither the individual nor the group, to reiterate once more, has an existence apart from the other. Isolated or completely independent behavior cannot be *meaningfully* defined, and as something occurring out of a social context, it is nonexistent.

Recent researches in biology, sociology, and anthropology disclose that the evolution of the individual has depended on the evolution of the group. What man might have become over the millennia of his evolution outside a group is idle speculation, but the evidence suggests that he is what he is in no small degree because he evolved, not merely as an individual, but in a group. The individual has survived only because he has from the beginning lived in a group, and groups themselves have evolved as socially fit organizations of individuals. Biological factors are not explanatory of survival and of present behavior. They have psychological meaning only in a social context. There is a growing conviction among biologists, based on experimental investigation, that all animals are social, and that the solitary individual is nonexistent.[1]

[1] There is a growing literature dealing with this problem. See especially B. W. Kunkel, Members one of another, *Sci. Monthly, 4* (1917), 534-43; W. C. Allee, *Animal Aggregations. A study of general sociology* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1931), *The social life of animals* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., Inc., 1938, and *Cooperation among animals* (rev. ed.; New York: Abelard-Schuman, Ltd., 1951), J. P. Scott, Group formation determined by social behavior, a comparative study of two mammalian societies, *Sociometry, 8* (1945), 42-52; S. R. Slavson (ed.), *The practice of group therapy* (New York: International Universities Press, Inc., 1947).

FIELD DYNAMICS. At the basis of every study of organic relationship is the problem of organization. Philosophers, in seeking to understand the nature of truth, are invariably confronted with the problem of the relation between the particular and the general, with "internal" and "external" relations. Biologists, in investigating the nature of organic life, are faced with the problem of integrating the organ with the organism. Psychologists, in formulating a theory of group behavior, come up against the difficulty of relating the individual to the group. Each in his own way must sooner or later come to grips with the problem of the relationship of the part to the whole. Historically there have been three distinct philosophies of organization—the mechanistic, the vitalistic, and the field dynamic. The field dynamic, which alone concerns us here, affirms that, while we may theoretically isolate the individual from his context or milieu, the two are in reality inseparable and form a dynamic or organic unity. There are several factors that account for the organic unity.

Social interaction. This is a type of relationship between two or more persons in which the actions of one are affected by the actions of another. It takes place by means of communication, anticipation, role-perception-and-enactment, and significant symbols.

Interaction as such, while it mutually affects two or more people, may remain relatively static and unproductive of change in human relations. It is important in the study of individuals and groups because it takes place through *communication* whereby two or more individuals are enabled to reach common understandings and effect cooperative behavior. As interaction becomes more communicative, undifferentiated individuals and their behavior take on a clearer focus and meaning. Each can now more clearly articulate his relation to the others and adjust himself to them with greater skill. It is important furthermore because it is through communication that the individual experiences his initial feeling of belonging to the group, perceives its

common culture, and discovers that he has a particular position in it. And finally, as will become clear later, group discussion, group decision, and collective problem-solving are impossible in the absence of communicative interaction.

The concept of anticipation or expectancy is well established in psychology, where it is often called "set," or a readiness to react to stimuli. All group behavior is characterized by anticipation or expectancy. When the infant cries, he "expects" the mother to come to him. While his mother is performing an accommodative act toward him, such as stimulating him with her breast when he is hungry, he is adjusting his behavior toward her in such a manner as to lead to the satisfaction of his hunger. His anticipation of nourishment is a step in the completion of the communicative act. An individual performing a group activity who is unskilled in anticipating the oncoming acts of others will be equally ineffective in modifying his behavior toward the group norm. In this case he never fully belongs to the group, for he fails to adjust himself to the expectation of others.

From anticipation to role-perception-and-enactment is but a small step. Man is a social animal, among other reasons, because he constantly views himself through another person's eyes, because he vicariously experiences the thoughts, feelings, and acts of another individual. Our acts are ways of behaving which we attribute to others because we perceive them in ourselves. Perceiving one's role is but one phase of the process. Man is also a role-playing animal. He *enacts* the perception which he has of his relation to other individuals. It is the enactment of another person's role that gives meaning to one's own role.

Communication, anticipation, and role behavior reach a high level of complexity when they take place by means of *significant symbolization*. Communication in a group proceeds through conventionalized language, through symbols which, while they frequently are no more than motor cues or gestures, have approximately the same meaning to everyone in the group. In complex interaction, such as that tak-

ing place in a dynamic group, the cue or gesture takes on a conscious or self-conscious meaning; it becomes a significant symbol. A significant symbol has the same effect on the individual using it that it has on the individual for whom it is intended.[2] By virtue of communication, anticipation, role behavior, and symbolic interaction people form common perceptions of one another and of the situation in which they interact. When they see the same object or event in very much the same way, they are able to work in unison toward the same goal. When they have no common perspective, they work at cross purposes, and their relationship is conflictual rather than consensual. Especially clear in this analysis is the role-perception-and-enactment function, in which each person assumes a clearly structured psychological activity toward the others.

Role of the individual in the group. The relation between the individual and the group has long been a vexing problem in social psychology. Although we have reiterated the proposition that the individual and the group are inseparable, the problem cannot be stated so simply. For too long it was thought—and the idea has been supported by common sense—that the group is a collection of individuals, and that when there are no individuals there is no group. This interpretation gave rise to the equally untenable view that an individual remains unaffected by group membership, for the group consists only of the individuals acting individually. Recent researches have, however, dispelled this conclusion, along with the mystical notion of a group mind. While we cannot in the present state of our knowledge say with certainty that either view is correct, there is a growing consensus among social psychologists that individuals behave differently in groups than they do as solitary persons. There are psychological influences in a group which are different from those affecting a person in solitude. The group possesses properties unlike those that are

[2] See H. Bonner, *Social psychology: an interdisciplinary approach* (New York: American Book Co., 1953), pp. 42–46.

present in the single individual. The presence of other people elicits a different pattern of responses than those which characterize the behavior of an isolate. The co-ordinated behavior of group members is unlike the inte-grated behavior of a solitary person.

The experimental investigations reviewed in Chapter 1, as well as a large body of recent data, lend strong support to the foregoing observations. Particularly interesting and convincing is Sherif's well-known experiment on the "auto-kinetic" phenomenon. When an individual was exposed for a few seconds to a fixed point of light in a dark room, he saw it not only as a moving point but estimated its motion in terms of his own frame of reference, or "anchorage point." When several individuals, each with his own anchorage point, were permitted to compare their own range with those of others in a group, the individuals modified their frame of reference in the direction of the group's norm. They saw the light, in other words, as the group as a whole saw it, despite their prior individually established anchorage points.[3]

There is an aspect of the relation of the individual to the group, however, which is most unrealistically overlooked. Students of group dynamics, practical workers in the field more than researchers, have exaggerated the group-de-pendency needs of individuals. It is certain that individuals desire to belong and to be accepted by others. But all healthy individuals periodically get fed up with belonging and are motivated by a strong need for independence. Co-operation and agreement are not always a blessing, and in-dependence, disagreement, and all-round self-expression are the source of individual creativeness and good will. If the extreme emphasis on group dependence becomes a norm, as some writers seem to think it is doing, the fear of ex-pressing one's individuality will be an inescapable conse-quence. But in the eager desire to reach conformity and agreement among ourselves, we do not necessarily resolve

[3] M. Sherif, A study of some social factors in perception, *Arch. Psychol.*, *187* (1935).

our conflicts. On the contrary we conceal them, and in this way they do damage to the group in a manner analogous to the way repressed feelings injure the individual. In this manner the group can no more find out what troubles it than can the isolated individual. The fact is that conflict is an inescapable part of life. Dependence and independence need to be recognized as twin desires in all healthy individuals. The conflicts arising from the twin needs for dependence and independence in themselves may not be harmful, but the devious rationalizations which a denial of them generates can easily be detrimental.

Conclusion regarding the part-whole relationship. The problem of the relation of part to whole is an old one in science. It has plagued psychology in the form of the relation of the individual to the group. To most nineteenth-century sociologists the group was a reality and the individual an abstraction. To most psychologists of the same period only the individual was real, the group being an abstraction. Careful research in the past quarter-century, however, has demonstrated that the individual does not exist per se, but in mutual relationship with others; that the group likewise has no independent existence, but is a pattern of interacting persons, producing and produced by a situational context. The group is thus a *network of psychological relationships,* not a mystical entity. Using more conventional language, we might say that the group is the stimulus-situation, whereas the individual is the organism who is affected by and acts upon the stimulus-situation.

This way of stating an old problem has marked a turning point in the analysis of group structure. It denies autonomy to both psychology and sociology in the analysis and description of group behavior. The sociological concept of a group mind has been replaced by the social-psychological view of the group as a field of interacting and intercommunicating individuals. When then we speak in this book of collective problem-solving, group decision-making, and the like, we do not mean that the group as an autonomous

being solves or discusses anything. It is but a way of stating that individuals, forming a psychological group structure, have solved a problem together. The solution, while a "product" in the sense that it can be denoted, is always a process of social interaction and cannot generate in a vacuum.

The old problem of priority—of which comes first, the individual or the group?—from our point of view is meaningless. Thus it seems to the present writer that neither the individualistic nor the collectivistic model is exclusively valid. To say, as F. H. Allport and J. F. Dashiell have done, that in group-cognitive activities the individual is the unit of behavior is to nullify their own demonstration that the individual's behavior is directed by the group. To assert, on the other hand, as Bales and Strodtbeck have done, that group problem-solving is the prototype of individual solutions is only a partial truth.[4] One can predict the solution of a common problem neither from the thinking of any single individual involved in it, nor from the group as a whole. The only satisfactory way of stating the problem is to assert that individual and group thinking take place in different field contexts. While individual thinking is no doubt to some extent an introjection of the thought processes of others—psychoanalysis would seem to confirm this in the development of thinking in a child—the essence of individual thinking is that the context is different. Group thinking occurs in a *real* social context; whereas individual thinking takes place in an imagined or remembered social context. A group solution represents the solution of a problem by individuals in interactive communication. It has no independent existence.

When we speak of the group, according to this approach, we think of it, not as a generalized entity, as sociologists do when they refer to an institution, but as an interaction system, as a dynamic and organized totality. This way of

4 R. F. Bales and F. L. Strodtbeck, Phases in group problem-solving, *J. abnorm. soc. Psychol.*, *46* (1951), 485–95.

analyzing the problem exempts us from the charge of reification to which Lewin inadvertently exposed himself. Despite Lewin's misleading assertion concerning the "reality" of the group, however, the whole content and spirit of his researches and writings are a convincing refutation of the group-mind hypothesis. He has argued—and recent researches have confirmed his assertions—that the extremists on both sides have obscured rather than illuminated the problem of interindividual relationships. By stressing one factor to the exclusion of the other, writers on group psychology have concealed the most important fact, namely, that the two factors constitute a unity. To attribute priority to either the individual or the group is not only meaningless and unrealistic but is contrary to the evidence disclosed by competent research. A group product, whether it be a fact learned, a problem solved, or a tension removed is an interindividual property—something experienced by individuals but shared and agreed upon by them together.

· THEORETICAL CONSTRUCTS FOR GROUP DYNAMICS. Empirical explanations or descriptions of phenomena seldom probe beneath the surface. This is most frequently true when these phenomena are formulated statistically. Theoretical explanations, those that employ logical constructs, are designed to disclose the underlying dynamics of the phenomena being investigated. The history of science bears witness to the usefulness of theoretically sound constructs, for they have frequently led to the discovery of the interrelations between empirical or experimental variables. Their test lies in their fruitfulness, in their function of identifying the variables which are functionally connected with what can be empirically or experimentally observed. "A scientist may use any mathematics, a poet any language, and a philosopher any logic if it fits his needs."[5] The investigator in group dynamics, in seeking to find a "fit" to his conceptions, may use as Lewin has done, topological constructs and dy-

    [5] H. Bonner, Field theory and sociology, *Sociol. Soc. Res.*, 33 (1949), 172.

namic analysis. We shall present the essential concepts in the present section.

Topological constructs. In presenting the interactionist position of Simmel we called attention to the concept of *social space* which characterizes his views on the human group (see Chapter 1, pp. 9–10). The spatial properties of human relationships may be described by means of topological constructs, of which the most important are those presented below.

A *region* is a segment of social space, an element of a social field. Regions differ in size, shape, and boundary. Irrespective of these differences they are topologically equivalent. A region can be divided into *subregions*, usually designated as subgroups, which frequently play important roles in making either for harmony or conflict in a group. Dissident elements, disruptive role behavior, minority groups are well-known examples. Subregions create important problems of group balance, group harmony, and the role of the leader in resolving group conflicts. The subregions represent social differentions, group imbalance, and collective reorganization.

A *barrier* represents the degree of resistance to interindividual communication. It hinders group participation and group action. Examples are numerous. If a group, determined to resolve its own tensions regarding, say, race relations is dominated by prejudice, its attempt to reach its goal may be seriously impaired; or the group, unable to surmount the barrier, may cease to function altogether.

When a person surmounts a barrier, his behavior is ordered to a new social region. The new social region is instrumental in restructuring a person and changing his behavior. A person's behavior, as we have seen, is influenced by the region in which he has *membership*. To repeat a former assertion, when persons act together they give rise to a system of relationship, so that it is difficult to predict their behavior as a system or group from premeasures of

personality variables (see Chapter 1, p. 20). **Their mem-bership in a group restructures their individual behavior.**

Dynamic constructs. Spatial or topological constructs do not inform us regarding interaction, communication, and other behavioral manifestations. They do not account for change and activity. Activity and change require for their description constructs which indicate locomotion or mobility. For this purpose we need *dynamic* constructs.

While a *social field* is spatial or topological, its essential property is mobility. It is dynamic, that is, a changing pattern of interacting individuals. A social field is any acting or changing group to which the behavior of individuals, regions, and subregions may be ordered.

Tension is another dynamic construct. It refers to the excitation state of a field, a region, or an individual. It is not identical with the psychopathologist's notion of strain, anxiety, or emotional disturbance, but with set, expectancy, receptiveness. Abstractly, it is "a tendency for changes in the direction of equalization of the state of neighboring systems."[6] Thus, to cite Lewin's example, in studying morale in the army, it is important to know whether the loyalty of the individual soldier is directed to his squad, his platoon, his regiment, or to the whole army.[7]

The concept of *vector* has an important place in physics, where it is defined as a force having both direction and magnitude. If we define a "force" as a directed excitation state, we can use the concept of vector to describe the behavior of a group. Interacting individuals trying to solve a problem or directing their action toward a common goal are behaving vectorially; that is, they are moving in a certain direction with all the psychological energy which is available to them by the character of the field situation at the moment. A vector thus represents locomotions in a field, changes in field structure, the goal of individuals working together, etc. When strong barriers to interaction exist, the magnitude of

[6] K. Lewin, *Field theory in social science* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1951), p. 11.
[7] *Ibid.*, p. 162.

the vectors directed toward a goal will be greater than when the field is fluid or the barriers are few. Conversely, a field or group of interacting persons is the more fluid the smaller the forces which are necessary, other things being equal, to produce a given change in the situation.[8] The success of a group in solving a problem, for instance, will depend, among other things, upon the number and magnitude of the barriers which impede the free communication of ideas and feelings among the members. The situation as a whole is described by a psychological vector, by the striving of individuals for a specific goal.

The concept of *valence* represents the attraction or repulsion value of an object for an individual or a group. It describes cohesive and disruptive forces in group relationships, or cooperation and conflict. A *positive* valence designates membership-character, group belongingness, a vector directed toward the same region. A *negative* valence designates isolation, leaving the field (or group), a vector directed away from the same region.

The relation of the part to the whole, or of the individual to the group, may thus be analyzed topologically and dynamically. Topology is the general science of spatial relations. Dynamics is the general science of the motion of bodies. Topology and dynamics together give us a non-metrical description of reality: the one, the positions of bodies in a field; the other, their motion through it.

CONCLUDING REMARKS. The value of the "constructive" analysis of group phenomena lies in its emphasis of dynamic relational concepts. A theory of group behavior, on the basis of this approach, relates concepts to one another, thus forming a system. In dealing with real group activities in concrete groups, it enables us to see the actions of individuals in their transactive relation with one another. Together, theory and practice give us a view of group behavior that takes cognizance of the individual case and of general laws

[8] See K. Lewin, *Principles of topological psychology* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1936), p. 87.

at the same time. This is in substance the meaning of Lewin's important distinction between the Aristotelian notion of "substance" and the Galilean concept of "function."[9] The analysis of group structures is dynamic in proportion to the use of constructs by which empirical data are organized into a coherent system. Behavior itself, whether individual or collective, is dynamic if changes or adjustments in one "part" are followed by changes or adjustments in all the others. We need no longer worry, from this point of view, about the reality of the group. It is real, not in the sense that a substantive entity is real, but as a *dynamic whole*, as an *interdependence of parts*, as an identification of individuals with others in a transactive or cooperative relationship.

A dynamic group, then, is not a collection of interdependent individuals, merely, but a group of persons who are *psychologically* aware of their interindividual relationships and who are *moving toward a goal that they have agreed upon collectively*. The interaction of one person with others forms a web of relationships in which the action of each takes place more or less spontaneously. Their interactions are integrated in such a way that their psychological tensions are shared. The "togetherness" of the group as a dynamic structure is due to a "circular" reaction in which there is a high degree of self-intensification in each member of his own "excitement" as he finds it reflected in others. In this process shared feelings and tension, which in each member separately had no adequate outlet, are freely expressed. When a person's responses to others is shared by them, when these experiences become reciprocal or interactive, there exists the basic condition of group behavior.

⁹ K. L. Lewin, The conflict between Aristotelian and Galilean modes of thought in psychology, *J. gen Psychol.*, 5 (1931), 141-77. This contrast is Lewin's application to psychology of a distinction made by Cassirer, who influenced Lewin, between substance and function in scientific and mathematical theory. See E. Cassirer, *Substanzbegriff und Funktionsbegriff* (Berlin: Verlag Cassirer, 1910), translated into English as *Substance and function* (Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 1923).

SOME OBSERVATIONS REGARDING GROUP DEVELOPMENT

On the basis of our analysis thus far, and as suggested by empirical studies of groups in process, some significant propositions emerge. These propositions, while involving concepts which have already been expounded, are not identical with them. We have, for example, discussed the concept or process of interaction on several occasions. Basic though it is to group formation, interaction helps to account for *any* kind of group process, from the casual greeting of two neighbors as they pass each other on the street to the complex involvement of persons in a decision-making group trying to solve a common problem.

MOTIVATION. It is a commonplace that human groups exist because in interacting with others in accommodative ways a person can better satisfy his own needs, desires, and wishes. His basic and derived needs can be satisfied only through the accommodation or cooperation of at least one other person. Survival, security, friendship, affection, and the like, can be gratified only in groups. Through concerted effort man can attain goals which he cannot reach in isolation.

Groups arise and function because of common motives. When men act at cross-purposes it is because they are impelled by individual, rather than common, motives, or by motives which are incompatible and irreconcilable. When a person's responses to others are shared by them, there exists the basic condition of group behavior. Modern psychological research has abundantly demonstrated that human behavior acquires meaning only in relation to a framework of factors operating in a social setting. This social setting consists, among other determinants, of human needs and the ways in which these needs are satisfied. On the basis of this research we can say categorically that most people, if not all, desire and enjoy belonging to a group. Because of the nature of early socialization, with its inescapable childhood dependence on others, all normal human beings are

responsive to one another. From the early security of family relations other attitudes develop, such as loyalty, affection, and pride. These needs will differ from individual to individual, and the group does not satisfy them in the same way for all persons. Nevertheless, there are many recurrent strivings and modes of discharging them. Some of these we shall examine briefly.

Being a social animal, man derives satisfaction from *belongingness* as such. Isolation is a myth, whereas belongingness is a fact. There are various explanations of this pleasure of belonging, but chief among them is that it engenders general well-being. In associations like the family and friendship group, for instance, tension is reduced to a minimum. To the extent that members are enabled to take one another for granted, they create a relaxed atmosphere for themselves. Tension and insecurity are greatly reduced or eliminated altogether. The repertoire of defenses, concealments, and deceptions, which pervade so many of our daily relationships, can be dispensed with, and an atmosphere of mutual trust and acceptance is freely generated. We are not, of course, unmindful of the opposite conditions that prevail in some groups—of the conflicts, antipathies, and generally unhappy conditions that well-nigh destroy its members psychologically. Some of these conditions we shall describe later, especially in our discussion of intergroup tensions and conflicts. To the extent, however, that any group takes on face-to-face characteristics, as is true of a primary group, a committee, a discussion group, or a club, it provides its members with the conditions in which the need for self-defense and self-justification is greatly reduced.

Not all individuals, however, are satisfied with group belongingness as such. *Some desire not only to belong but even more to influence, persuade, or lead others.* In some people these motives exceed the need for acceptance. Belongingness as such is for them only a means whereby they may direct and influence others. When the need to dominate is all-powerful, authoritarian control becomes the central gratification. When it is softened by a consideration for

the well-being of others, democratic leadership is a normal consequence. In the latter case, dominance loses its aggressive properties, and the individual finds satisfaction in being an instrument for the achievement of goals collectively.

Human beings are motivated to belong to a group because of the opportunity it affords them in playing the role of another. Taking the role of another is a mark of the socialized human being. Since one individual's role-taking presupposes the role-playing of another, role behavior gives people opportunities to accept and be accepted by others. Role behavior is possible only in a group. The group presents numerous situations in which the individual can display his skills, exercise his abilities, and become recognized for whatever individual merits he may possess and the group is willing to recognize and reward. Group cohesiveness depends in good measure on the ability and willingness of every individual to play his roles in such ways as to enable other individuals to play their own roles successfully. In short, much of the satisfaction that a person finds in belonging to a group is derived from his opportunities to play his role as one of its members.

Individuals participate in some group activities because there is no other way to perform these activities. Defending one's village or one's nation, discussing or debating an issue, singing in a chorus, playing a game, and the like are performances the satisfaction of which can be achieved only by group membership. Many activities give satisfaction purely through their collective properties, through the fact that they are performed in friendly concert with other people. Because these satisfactions are commonplace we must not ignore their importance, for they account for a large area of human behavior at every stage of individual and social development.

Individuals are motivated toward group belongingness, further, because *it gratifies their need for social status,* for recognition by others, especially by outsiders. Social status is a potent factor in the image which others form of us and in our image of ourselves. Not belonging can be a

painful, even a terrifying, experience to most people, and some will go to extreme lengths to achieve group status. The writer recalls the case of an individual, while no doubt extreme, in whom status through belongingness reached pathological proportions. He conceived of his work as a new profession in need of a new name which would properly identify it. We shall call it *Artintecture*. Since he was the only Artintect in existence, he felt lonely and unrecognized. To end his feeling of isolation he printed a "Who's Who in Artintecture," composed of two hundred or more fictitious names, with his own inserted in the proper alphabetical locus. In moments of depression induced by the failure of his "school" to materialize, he turned to his "Who's Who" to find gratification in seeing his name listed with those of many others. While he knew that the directory was his own creation, he found pleasure in knowing that he "belonged."

People are motivated toward group belongingness, finally, because, as Gordon points out, *groups satisfy the desire for self-actualization*.[10] It is characteristic of every healthy individual to grow, and to desire a continuation of growth, of fulfillment and enhancement of the self. We have already remarked that the individual likes to belong to groups because they afford him opportunities to play roles, utilize skills, and gain recognition by others for such abilities as they are willing to recognize and reward. Self-actualization is the motive to realize these goals objectively, in the presence of others. The group thus provides the individual with a maximum degree of self-actualization, with the realization of potentialities, with the attainment of common goals. Stated in another way, the group serves as a matrix for self-direction and self-extension in that it elicits and demands loyalty and regard for the group and its interests and ideals. A mark of individual maturity may well be the degree of one's self-actualization in, identification with, and self-involvement in the goals and ideals of our group.

[10] T. Gordon, *Group-centered leadership* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1955), pp. 54–55.

GROUP NORMS. It is difficult to conceive the formation
and preservation of a group in the absence of standard forms
of behavior. While there may be no explicit standards pres-
ent in the early interactive phases of group formation, a set
of norms soon develops, giving the interactive structure a
degree of stability without which it could not long function
as a group. Just as society as a whole could not exist with-
out codes or established rules of behavior, so a dynamic
group would be impossible without standardized modes of
interacting with one another. These standards, or norms,
serve as frames of reference for the behavior of one indi-
vidual in his relations to other individuals.[11] When an
individual becomes a member of the group, his membership
is determined by the fact that he accepts, at least provision-
ally, the reference frame of the group. He does not behave
as he pleases, and he does not satisfy his motives arbitrarily.
The dominant norms of the group give him a standardized
interpretation of his own experiences, and as long as he
remains a part of the group, he adheres to the meanings
which its norms provide. One cannot explain the similarity
of behavior of people in groups on any other ground. We
have already called attention to the fact that one cannot
explain the behavior of individuals in groups by their per-
sonal biographies only, and that one cannot predict group
behavior from a knowledge of individual behavior alone.
Early sociological studies of gangs, such as those of Thrasher,
Shaw, and Landesco, established this fact at least thirty
years ago.[12] The group norms of offending gangs, juvenile
delinquent groups, for example, are in fact so binding upon
their members that they constitute a challenge to the estab-

[11] For an important discussion of the whole psychology of norms the
student should consult the writings of M. Sherif. See, for example, M.
Sherif and H. Cantril, *The psychology of ego involvements* (New York:
John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1947), *passim*, M. Sherif and C. W. Sherif, *An
outline of social psychology* (rev. ed., New York: Harper & Bros., 1956),
chap. VIII.

[12] F. M. Thrasher, *The gang* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press,
1927), J. Landesco, *Organized crime in Chicago*, The Illinois Crime Survey,
1929; C. R. Shaw, *The natural history of a delinquent career* (Chicago:
The University of Chicago Press, 1931).

lished codes of the larger community; in fact, they form a subgroup tradition, having its own internal structure, morale, *esprit de corps*, and strong solidarity.[13] They provide their members with a frame of reference, a pattern of behavior, in dealing with members of the in-group and with members of the out-group. The pattern of delinquent behavior is such that, although it may not be disorganizing of an individual as such, when expressed in the context of the gang's total subculture, it can make for a vicious criminal or delinquent. For the pattern consists of gambling, smoking, drinking, obscenity, promiscuous sexual relations, and the specific skills of pickpocketing, burglarizing, jack-rolling, and the like.[14]

Our primary task here, however, is not to diagnose antisocial behavior, but to demonstrate the effectiveness of group norms in determining the behavior of individuals as group members. Persons in groups regulate or control their behavior through the norms which they have collectively established. A person's status in the group, his acceptance or rejection by other members, is largely dependent on his adherence to its code. *Self-regulation* is an important property of dynamic groups. Rewards for adherence to, and punishments for deviations from, the group norms maintain and perpetuate the group. Some of the most crucial demonstrations of this fact have been made by studies of industrial and other working groups. If the group should, for instance, decide to perform only a specified amount of work, individual workers will generally abide by the group's wishes. A person who deviates from the expected norm is labeled a "rate-buster," is ignored as a person, is ridiculed, or may even receive physical punishment.[15] Those individuals, however, who deviate from the norms by performing insufficient work are also socially rejected. They are considered "chiselers" and are scorned as much as the "rate-busters."

[13] Thrasher, *The gang*, p. 57.

[14] *Ibid.*, p. 388.

[15] See F. J. Roethlisberger and W. J. Dickson, *Management and the worker* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1941).

Studies like the above, of gangs and of factory workers, indicate the controlling force of social norms. Groups design or evolve explicit codes of expected behavior, and those who remain members behave in accordance with their dictates. Most members, even those who deviate from the group's demands, are aware of the norms and their binding force in the individual's behavior. These codes, or group norms, make for economy in interindividual behavior, for they are explicit indicators of how a person is expected to act in relation to other persons in a group context.

FUNCTIONAL HIERARCHY. Our discussion thus far has described intragroup relations as a structure of motives, roles, and norms. No group exists for a period of time, however, without organizing its interdependent members into a *functional hierarchy*. The roles which a person assumes in his group carry with them a specified function, such as that of a harmonizer, a dominator, and expediter, or a democratic leader. The position of each individual is determined by his specific contribution to the achievement of a collective goal. Differentiation, no less than integration, of function characterizes all interactive relations among individuals. Potentials for playing roles in a group, for solving common problems, for effective leadership, and the like are not equally distributed throughout a group. While it is true that in a democratic group, leadership may pass from one individual to another, there is a strong tendency for that important function to be discharged by those individuals only who are recognized by all others as capable of assuming the expected role; the role, that is, of *patterning* the behavior of a group, of *facilitating* action toward a goal.[16]

Some writers on group dynamics, in order to stress the democratic nature of group decision-making, have de-emphasized the hierarchical feature of intragroup relations. The two are not, however, incompatible, and the facts themselves compel us to recognize the existence of hierarchical

[16] See A. W. Gouldner (ed.), *Studies in leadership* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1950), pp. 17–18.

relationships. Social scientists, particularly anthropologists, have shown that both achieved and ascribed statuses in groups are contingent upon the group's response to an individual's capacities. The relation of one person to another is structured by the role and status of each. The role and status of every member are conditioned by the existing norms, or the members may generate new norms. This standardization of expected behavior toward others, this hierarchical grouping of individuals, points up the interrelation and interpenetration of motives, roles, norms, and differential function in accounting for the behavior of groups.[17] The objection to interpreting group behavior in terms of hierarchical dimensions rests, it seems to the present writer, not upon empirical evidence but upon the tendency to think of the hierarchical positions as stable and relatively permanent. Unless we assume that a group is a set of determinable relationships, however fleeting and tenuous, we cannot speak of a group at all. While not every member of the group may be *aware* of his position in relation to others, he can act as one of its members only by having such a position.[18]

Since in many small groups leadership is transmitted to various members, the illusion that no hierarchization exists is often developed. Although some writers on group dynamics speak of leaderless groups, the existence of the latter must be seriously questioned.[19] While in the initial phases of group formation no *discernible* structure of expectancies among members may exist, perceptual and intellectual jockeying does, nonetheless, take place. Gradually the expectancies become more specific, roles are more clearly defined, norms

[17] This hierarchical relationship of members one to another is interestingly brought out in W. F. Whyte's *Street corner society* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1943).

[18] For an early experimental treatment of this problem, see W. I. Newstetter, M. J. Feldstein, and T. M. Newcomb, *Group adjustment: a study in experimental sociology* (Cleveland: Western Reserve University Press, 1938).

[19] For a discussion of leaderless groups, see H. Ansbacher, The history of the leaderless group discussion, *Psychol. Bull.*, 48 (1951), 383-91; B. M. Bass, The leaderless group discussion, *Psychol. Bull.*, 51 (1954), 465-92.

are crystallized, and actions toward a goal are mutually fostered. A differentiation of function that was initially only incipient has become actualized.[20]

The functioning of the hierarchization principle can be seen especially in role conflicts. When faced with the conflict of roles, an individual will ascertain, consciously or unconsciously, a priority between them. Some things will then be viewed as more urgent than others. A foreman in a factory, for instance, is given orders by his boss. He will pass these orders in turn to the workers in his department. He cannot with impunity behave otherwise. A chain of communication operates in which each individual will enact the role expected of him. If the role which he enacts violates the norms of the group, he will be forced into line by its members. In a normal family, care of the children takes priority over the care of domestic animals. For students, attending classes has priority over the affairs of one's fraternity. The subject in each case must choose between alternative roles. Of course, we recognize the fact that role conflicts are handled or resolved by means other than hierarchization. For example, they are often resolved by enacting each role separately and at a different time. An individual may repudiate one role temporarily while he is enacting another. Another person may lead a double life, and so on. Our concern here, however, is with the enactment of conflicting roles in a single group through its temporal duration.[21]

A very interesting confirmation of the principle of hierarchical grouping is found in Munch's anthropological description of the interactions of three men on the island of Tristran da Cunha, off St. Helena. When they arrived on the island, they renounced any desire for or claim to hierarchical relationships, believing that they could live together effectively without the superordination-subordination rela-

[20] See M. E. Roseborough, Experimental studies of small groups, *Psychol. Bull.*, 50 (1953), 275–303.

[21] See S. A. Stouffer and J. Toby, Role conflict and personality, *Amer. J. Sociol.*, 56 (1951), 395–406; J. Toby, Some variables in role-conflict analysis, *Soc. Forces*, 30 (1952), 324–27.

tionship to which they had been accustomed. Instead, complete equality was to govern their interactions. After a time, however, and despite their belief in the *ethical desirability* of the current arrangement, they soon found it unworkable. For the proper and efficient discharge of his duties, each person had assumed a certain role and status toward the others, and all of them recognized the necessity of their functional positions in the framework of the whole. Thus what avowedly started out as a "leaderless" group gradually took on a hierarchical structure in which each member was observed to perform a definable and necessary function.[22] Beginning as an undifferentiated and unstructured association of individuals, it developed into a psychological organization of distinct roles and expectations.

Further confirmation of the principle of hierarchization is found in an experimental investigation by O. J. Harvey.[23] In this experiment, which cannot be described and analyzed in detail here, adolescent clique members were asked to estimate the future performance of different individuals. Three members were chosen from each of ten cliques according to the sociometric position which each held in his group, namely, the leader, the individual occupying a middle rank, and the member with the lowest standing in the group. The level of aspiration of each member was also determined. Each clique member threw a dart, estimated his own performance on the next trial, and estimated the performance of the others.

The results revealed a statistically significant positive relationship between the individual's standing in his clique and the members' estimations of his performance. Members' estimates were highest for the leader, next for the member of middle ranking, and lowest for the member of lowest standing. Stating the results in the form of a generalization, we

[22] P. A. Munch, *Sociology of Tristran da Cunha* (Oslo, Norway: Jacob Dybwad, 1945). The above is confirmed in a study of a Japanese prison camp in the Philippine Islands. See E. H. Vaughan, *Community under stress* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1949).

[23] O. J. Harvey, An experimental approach to the study of status relations in informal groups, *Amer. sociol. Rev.*, *18* (1953), 357–67.

may say that "the level of aspiration of a member of an informal clique and the estimation of that member's future performance by other group members on a task of *significance to the group* bears a positive relationship to his relative position in the group hierarchy."[24]

The existence of a hierarchy in a group not only organizes its members in their interactive relations—and is thus conducive to cohesiveness—but is also the source of group tensions and imbalances. The flow of communication between persons of high and low status is often adversely affected. A person at the bottom of the hierarchy is less likely to influence one at the top, and his critical assessment of the latter's contribution to the group invariably suffers. The person at the bottom may perceive those at the top as a threat to his own position and freedom. On the other hand, high status enables an individual to indulge more freely and without apprehension in critical evaluation of the person below him. But Harold H. Kelley has shown in experimentally created hierarchies, there is also a general tendency for high-status individuals to restrict communication which would tend to lower their status or which would make them appear incompetent in the high-status position. Also, as he has shown, high-status persons inhibit their communication of criticism of their own performance to the groups below them.[25]

The adverse effects of hierarchical relations are further brought out in a study of power relations among group members. The results show that group members of *low* status "will perceive and behave toward high status members in an essentially ego-defensive manner, that is, in ways calculated to reduce the feeling of uneasiness experienced in their relations with *highs*."[26] Because of their ego-defensive-

[24] *Ibid.*, p. 367, italics in the original.

[25] H. H. Kelley, Communication in experimentally created hierarchies, *Hum. Relat.*, 4 (1951), 39–56.

[26] J. I. Hurwitz, A. F. Zander and B. Hymovitch, Some effects of power on the relations among group members, in D. Cartwright and A. Zander, *Group dynamics research and theory* (Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson & Co., 1953), p. 491.

ness, furthermore, the *lows* show positive reactions of liking the *highs*, tend to overrate the liking for themselves by the *highs*, and to communicate mainly with the latter. The authors sum up this relationship between *highs* and *lows* by saying that *lows* will be liked less than *highs* by both *lows* and *highs;* that all group members prefer less to be liked by *lows* than by *highs;* and that communication with *lows* will be less desired by all members.[27]

The hierarchization process sharply points up the limitation, if not the error, of de-emphasizing the role of dominant individuals in group relationships. While it is true that in some groups, as they become increasingly self-directive, the leader is less necessary, there exist at the present time no crucial researches or experimental data to permit us to conclude that we can eliminate him altogether. The experiments at the National Training Laboratory in Group Development, at Bethel, Maine, while highly interesting, do not support some people's arguments for the "leaderless group." It would appear that these claims for the "leaderless group" may derive more from enthusiasm for a doctrine than from empirical evidence.

INTERGROUP RELATIONS

The psychology of group formation which we have expounded thus far has concentrated exclusively on *intra*group relations. An enormous amount of theoretical analysis and operational research in group dynamics in recent years has investigated the interdependence of individuals. It has studied the consensus and disharmony of the relations of individuals *within* a group. Group dynamics, however, is also the study of conflict and harmony *between* groups. *Inter*group antagonisms, such as ethnic and racial prejudice, religious and ideological conflicts, international tension and harmony, are also important problems, and they have been investigated since the inception of group psychology. The

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[27] *Ibid.*, p. 492. For a sociometric analysis of the same relationships, see J. Thibaut, An experimental study of the cohesiveness of underprivileged groups, *Hum. Relat.*, 3 (1950), 251–78.

importance of intergroup relations has been vividly forced upon us by the realization, implicitly present for generations but only recently become the focus of scientific formulation, that just as no individual exists in isolation so no group functions by itself. No region of social space is a closed system but, as we pointed out in the discussion of topological and dynamic constructs, interacts with other regions. The intersection of social circles is a ubiquitous feature of human society. So great is the *interdependence of groups* today that events in one are almost invariably transmitted to others, producing either harmony or discord between them.

IN-GROUP AND OUT-GROUP RELATIONS. Although in-group and out-group relations are as old as man and have for centuries been recognized to exist, their conscious formulation into concepts was made, as far as one can determine, by William Graham Sumner.[28] This distinction is now so well known to the general reader that it is not necessary to give a detailed description of it. There are some features, however, which justify a brief elucidation.

Ethnocentrism describes the sentiment of acceptance by members of the in-group of one another and implies the attitude of rejection by the in-group of members of the out-group. While these attitudes are certainly pronounced in modern society, in some ancient and primitive societies they were carried to the point where "outsiders" were not even classified as human beings. Sumner describes this situation vividly. He writes:

When Caribs were asked whence they came, they answered, "We alone are people." The meaning of the name Kiowa is "real or principal people." The Lapps call themselves "men," or "human beings." The Greenland Eskimo think that Europeans have been sent to Greenland to learn virtue and good manners from the Greenlanders. Their highest form of praise for a European is that he is, or soon will be, as good as a Greenlander. . . . As a rule it is found that nature peoples call themselves "men." Others are something else—perhaps not defined—but not real men. In myths the origin of their own tribe is that of the real human race. They do not account for the others.[29]

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[28] W. G. Sumner, *Folkways* (Boston: Ginn & Co., 1906).
[29] *Ibid.*, p. 14.

Our concern is, of course, with ethnocentrism in contemporary groups. Although in contemporary groups, it does not usually involve the almost total rejection of the outgroup, ethnocentrism is nevertheless pronounced. Lines of cleavage exist between a variety of groups, especially between nations, classes, races, and ethnic and religious subcultures. Antipathy, prejudice, and other attitudes of exclusion characterize all these groups to some extent, coupled with preferential sentiments for members of their own group. Dynamically speaking, the in-group is a social field or region in which members are fairly homogeneous in attitudes and feelings; the out-group is a social field or region with reference to which the social and psychological boundaries of the in-group are relatively impermeable. They are social circles whose boundaries do not intersect.

In-group and out-group relations have also been described by the degree of *social distance* obtaining between one group and another. This concept "measures" the extent of acceptance or rejection of persons in group relationships.[30] It is also used to designate cleavages between groups, and therefore serves well to describe intergroup relations. Thus those groups between which conflict is at a minimum are described by less social distance than those between which sympathy and acceptance are relatively absent. Generally, there is more social distance, for example, between labor and management than between groups of workers themselves.

In-group and out-group relations, as measured by social distance, are always determined by *social norms*. Whether two groups will accept or reject each other is dependent on whether or not they agree on a standard of behavior or common norms. They accommodate themselves to each other and produce harmony between themselves when they either sympathetically respect each others' values or evolve a pattern of interaction based upon mutually accepted standards of behavior. In the absence of reciprocal norms, disharmony

[30] Bonner, *Social psychology*, p. 30.

and conflict easily arise. Numerous studies of social distance and ethnic attitudes in particular confirm this view.[31] They especially bring out the appalling extent of intergroup hostility in American life. Scientifically it is unrewarding to merely call attention to this fact and condemn it. Before intergroup hostility can be dealt with effectively, it is necessary to understand its nature and its source. Economic status, parental influence, education, and similar factors, play significant roles in its origin and propagation. Basic to all these, however, is the fact that a group lives in accordance with its dominant mores. In-group and out-group relations, whether manifested in ethnocentrism, social distance, or outright conflict, are, accordingly, products of the clash of social norms, not of the perversity of human nature. Conformity is a universal social pressure, and in their attitudes of exclusiveness toward one another men are simply bowing to its sovereign influence.

ROLE OF PERSONALITY VARIABLES. On several occasions we asserted that one cannot dependably predict the behavior of members of a group from a knowledge of their personalities. Personality variables cannot, however, be safely ignored. The problem faces us again when we consider the character of intergroup relations. While the results are inconsistent, there is some evidence to justify the hypothesis that harmony and hostility between groups are facilitated, even if they are not generated, by personality factors. This is especially true in intergroup prejudice. Although the investigations of Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswik, and others on the "authoritarian personality" have recently been subjected to severe criticism, their conclusions agree with the findings of other investigators. These conclusions assert that a prejudiced person is excessively rigid both affectively and intellectually. Cognitively the prejudiced person tends to be "intolerant of ambiguity"; that is, he cannot accept propo-

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[31] For the beginner a good review of this whole subject will be found in E. L. Hartley, *Problems in prejudice* (New York: King's Crown Press, 1946), and G. W. Allport, *The nature of prejudice* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc., 1954).